

Bringing Succot to Wollongong

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RHONDA Smith has not shaken a lulav and etrog since before the Holocaust, but 60 years later, the Warsaw Ghetto survivor performed the mitzvah at a Succot event at the University Wollongong.

The event, which was organised by the Australasian Union of Jewish Students,



Mobile succah ... Rabbi Eli Feldman with Rhonda Smith at the University of Wollongong.

Photo: KEVA

Jews of Shoal Haven and the Kibbutz Ex-Volunteers Association, was held on Labour Day and was attended by a group of Jews from Nowra.

"Rhonda was not connected to the Jewish community at all, but she was brought along and performed the mitzvah of lulav and etrog for the first time in 60 years," explained Rabbi Eli Feldman, who coordinates the mobile succah across NSW university campuses.

Rabbi Feldman said that Succot is considered a biblically universal festival, bringing the nations of the world together to celebrate, which is what the lulav and etrog represent. He said that the initiative not only brought together Jewish students at the University of Wollongong, but also unified the community at large.

"To be a united people, we need to recognise the importance of each other, regardless of decisions we make – ultimately we are all the same people and we have to look out for each other."